



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Kevin Power, Representatives Jean-Claude Ambroise, Joe Baril, Nancy E. Barnhart, Alicia Bauer, Nancy E. Beckwith, Michael Collins, Nancy M. Congdon, Warren T. Cooper, Luanne E. DeMatto, Syma Ebbin, Peter Fairbank, Nancy E. Gilly, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Keith L. Hedrick, Lynn Crockett Hubbard, Michael Dean Johnson, Rosanne E. Kotowski, Elizabeth Luck, Jackie Massett, Carole McCarthy, Roscoe Merritt, Constance Miller, Karen F. Morton, Scott Newsome, Dana C. Parfitt, Richard J. Pasqualini, Jr., Tim Plungis, Kristen L. Powers, Don Pratt, Betty A. Prochaska, John F. Scott IV, Jack Sebastian, Dana S. Semeraro, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Archie C. Swindell, Robert A. Warn and Lori A. Watrous

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

7:30 PM

Groton Senior Center

Regular Meeting

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m.

38 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Beckwith and Pratt called to say they are unable to attend this meeting. Rep. Svencer will be late.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Plungis, Rep. Powers, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Swindell, Rep. Warn and Rep. Watrous

Members Absent: Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Pratt and Rep. Svencer

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, School Superintendent Paul Kadri, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Wes Greenleaf, Board of Education members, Mayor James Streeter, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 13, 2011

A motion that the minutes be approved was made by Rep. Johnson, seconded by Rep. Pasqualini.

The vote to approve the minutes carried 36 in favor, 2 abstentions. (Abstaining: Reps. Bauer and Watrous.)

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

Mary Ann Little, 22 Pearl Street, Mystic, requested no additional reduction to the Education account. She recommended that the RTM request that the Board of Education (BOE) prepare a reorganization plan for the school system centered on the middle schools. She feels the Town Council reduction of \$500,000 is sufficient.

Anne Benedict, 21 Bolles Lane, Mystic, requested that the Education budget be approved with no reductions. She feels it is very important to provide pre-K and kindergarten to improve the long-term achievement of students.

Lisa Tess, 84 Ensign Drive, Mystic, asked that no further reductions be made to the Education

budget because she feels that it would have devastating results for students, teachers and the community. She mentioned that the community as a whole needs to agree on the future direction of Groton's school system. She lamented the fact that each year during budget deliberations, the community becomes angry, distrustful and divided over the Education budget.

Kevin Trejo, 536 Shennecossett Road, addressed spending by the BOE on items he feels are unnecessary for educating children. He noted that teachers have not received salary increases, but that administrative staff continues to receive increased compensation. He feels that there is extra money in the Education budget and asked that no increase be approved. He stated that the Education budget should be treated like Town Operations accounts that are being approved with a zero increase.

Stephen Alfield, 47 Somerset Drive, Mystic, asked the RTM to restore the CIP request for Judson Avenue drainage. He explained the ongoing problems affecting many residents due to inadequate drainage and the overbuilding approved by the Town in this area.

Andrew Parrella, 790 Eastern Point Road, opposes the continued increases to the BOE budget. He requested that administrators be asked for concessions, since a wage freeze has been implemented for teachers. He advocated a town-wide review of all buildings in order to better maintain and reuse the infrastructure already in place. He mentioned that new school buildings are not the only way to address racial imbalance.

Jennifer Sim, 309 Gold Star Highway, is concerned about any reductions to BOE funding. She feels that reducing the Education budget would be fiscally irresponsible and harmful to the Town without a long-term plan in place.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Power welcomed Lori Watrous as the new District 5 representative, replacing Christopher Burns who resigned.

F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

1. Financial report

Mr. Oefinger reported that the Fund Balance as of April 30, 2011 is approximately \$8.7 million; the General Contingency balance is \$299,999. The Manager mentioned that two fourth quarter transfers have been approved by the Town Council and referred to the RTM Finance Committee. He noted that if the transfers are approved, the remaining balance will be \$112,455; the Capital Reserve balance is \$324,394. He stated that the increase is primarily due to interest income and recording fees.

2. Monthly briefing

The Town Manager highlighted various items from the Town Manager's News.

Members discussed the Governor's approved budget, the Plan B budget, and the impact of State funding that Groton would ultimately receive.

G. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Mr. Kadri reported on a pilot program at Catherine Kolnaski School that will implement changes to classroom schedules in order to enhance student learning without affecting core subjects. He explained the implementation of the new point of sale system for food service.

H. LIAISON REPORTS

None.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. FINANCE - Chairman Hedrick

No meeting, no report.

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES - Chairman Pratt

No meeting, no report.

3. EDUCATION - Chairman Swindell

No meeting, no report.

4. RECREATION - Chairman Warn

No meeting, no report.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY - Chairman Parfitt

No meeting, no report.

6. PUBLIC WORKS - Chairman Collins

No meeting, no report.

7. RULES & PROCEDURES - Chairman Scott

No meeting, no report.

J. OTHER BUSINESS

2010-0115 Salary for Director of Parks and Recreation

Reassignment of a portion of the Parks and Recreation Director's salary to Account 2010 Golf Course Fund

This matter was Discussed.

Moderator Power requested that the Town Manager report on this referral at the June 8, 2011 RTM meeting.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Moderator Power adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk